

Kalimpong

\*Vol. 4 • Issue 4 April 2012 (1)

Rs. 10/-

The voice of the Darjeeling Hills

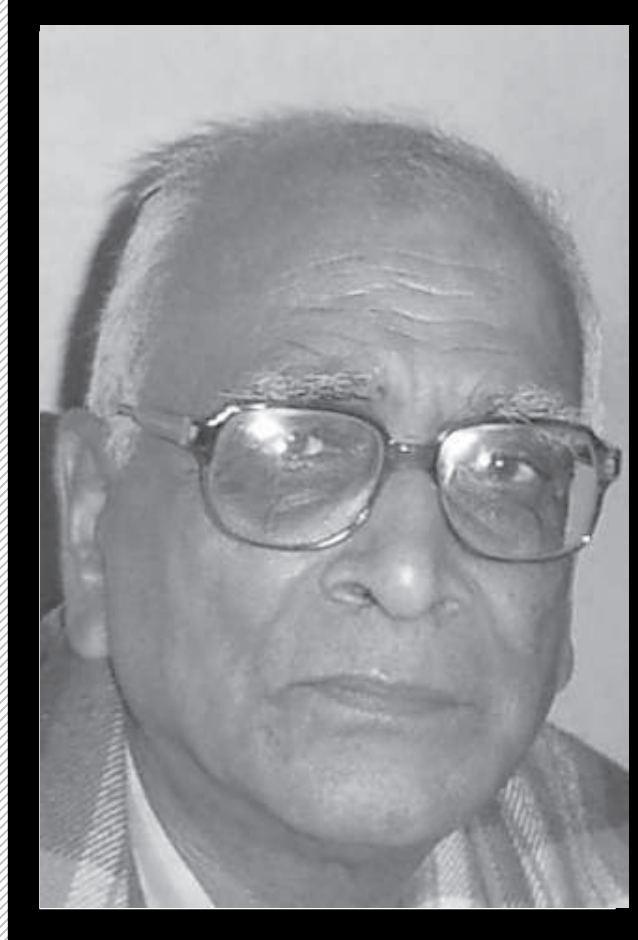
# Himalayan Times



## HITLER DIDI

The U turn queen

---



**LATE SAMARESH CHANDRA JAIN**  
**(Editor Himalayan Times from 1956 to 1963)**  
26th August 1936 - 7th September 2011

**In loving memory of the man who made Print  
Media what it is in Kalimpong today**

**The Himalayan Times Family**

# HIMALAYAN TIMES

Volume 4 issue 4

## GORKHA TRAGEDY ACT II

The "Sixth Schedule" issue was vehemently opposed and Ghising was thrown out of the Darjeeling scene. A new lease was given to the movement but for all purposes and for everyone to see has turned out to be a sham, writes Arun Acharya

P 9

### Editor:

Sandip C. Jain

### Asst. Editor

Prakriti Prabha Chettri

### Publisher:

Himalayan Sales, Main Road, Kalimpong

### Printers:

Mani Printing Press, R.C.Mintri Road,  
Kalimpong

### Design & Computer:

Jyotshna Tamang

### Marketing:

Ms. Anjali Sharma

### Circulation:

Chitra Basnet

RNI Regd. No. 5075 of  
01.01.1957

\*\*\*\*\*

### E-mail

himalayantimes@rediffmail.com

himalayantimes2012@gmail.com

### Web-site

www.himalayantimes.co.in

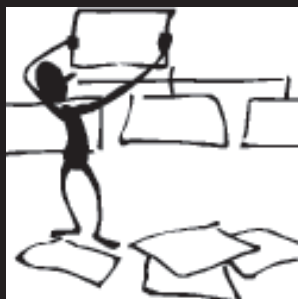
www.kalimponghimalayantimes.blogspot.com

\*\*\*\*\*

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the authors themselves and the publishers neither subscribe to their views nor will the publisher take any responsibilities for the same.

\*\*\*\*\*

## P12 You Name it, You Have it...



## CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEE TO STATEHOOD - FIFTH AND SIXTH SCHEDULE ONLY P6

## in this issue



## P17 First love of the hills

C M Lal remember his  
first break as a pre-  
Independence DHR  
foreman

## p20 THE COOKING DIARIES..

## p19 On a dull day in L o n d o n . .

### REGULARS

P4 EDITORIAL  
P23 RECALLING  
KALIMPONG





EDITORIAL

SANDIP C. JAIN

# HITLER DIDI

## The U turn queen

I am not too big a fan of the idiot box-sitting long hours opposite a TV, shedding tears over the idiotic *saas-bhahu* humbug is just not my idea of entertainment. But yes, once in a while I do randomly flip through channels to see if there is something interesting on air. But more than often, the only show that I find worth watching after flipping through 117 channels available on my Tata Sky is WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment). I kind of love watching the funny looking over sized men (Being the goody-goody types, I hurriedly change channels whenever the Divas, women wrestlers, come on screen) who act like spoilt kids trying to make the audience laugh at a school concert. Yes I know, its all idiotic but it does come from a box aptly named the idiot box.

A few days back while I was flipping through channels in between a contest featuring John Cena and Kane (it was supposed to be an ambulance match where the looser had to be packed off into the back of an ambulance), the title of a daily serial caught my eye which made me realize that it would be the best title for this particular article that I had been thinking of writing then. The title of that serial was "Hitler Didi".

Somehow this title is apt for this article when you consider that this piece is being based on the impulsive, explosive, fiery and extremely unpredictable Chief Minister of West Bengal, Miss Mamata Banerjee.

Ever since she began her political career as the angry young woman of Bengal

politics, as the leader of the youth congress, she has been more popularly known as "Didi" – now that she is the boss of this beleaguered state, power seems to have gone to her head and now she appears to behave more like Hitler than beloved Didi that she earlier was.

Banerjee, the much loved Didi before becoming the chief minister is now just the opposite of what she was earlier. Her words and actions today, as the Chief Minister seems to be just the opposite of what they were before she was crowned the empress of Bengal. The U – turn that she has taken have been of epic proportions. The same Miss Banerjee while in the opposition had spear headed many a agitations leading to general strikes ( most of which ended up violent, leading to deaths and injuries) but now with her on the hot seat the same Miss Banerjee is now an advocate against bandhs, sermonizing that they do more bad than good. This changed stance may win her some brownie points with the Corporate World but this sudden change has certainly not gone unnoticed by the General Public and the Press. It shows her principles as being flexible hence rendering her reliability as suspect. Threatening Government servicemen with " break in service" in case of being on leave on the day the Left trade unions called a strike on 28<sup>th</sup> of February certainly has not gone down well with the state government employees, hundreds of whom had to rent hotel rooms or arrange for other accommodation just to be present in "office" during the strike. This was Didi being considerate towards her beloved brothers and sisters.

Banerjee, the much loved Didi before becoming the chief minister is now just the opposite of what she was earlier. Her words and actions today, as the Chief Minister seems to be just the opposite of what they were before she was crowned the empress of Bengal. The U – turn that she has taken have been of epic proportions..



Didi's U-turn is most signified by the killing spree by her men in the main land of Bengal. In the years that

have gone by she had sold herself as a crusader against political killing or political vendetta. Having borne the brunt of the Left governments “goondagiri” in the last two decades, it was but expected that ‘Didi’ would show a more humane face- but she, it appears, is hell bent on giving it back harder than she had received.

The broad day light killing of former left front MLA Pradip Tah and his colleague, Gopal Gayer, at Dewandighi in Burdwan District is a case to point. The two leaders, both in their late sixties, were beaten to death, while leading a protest rally, right in the center of the town. Thousands were witness to this brutal slaying. Chotan Chakraborty, Patitpaban Tah, Suji Tah and Gopal Goswami were seen by half the town as well as the media as being the perpetrators of this mindless killing. And everyone in the area knows them to be Didi’s men. Rather than condemning this ghastly act, the public was blamed for the same. “The public had taken its revenge on the 34 years of misrule by the Left” was the verdict..... Taking age into consideration- Mamata Banerjee was not a “Didi” to these two senior citizens were were beaten to death but a “Baini”- Didi or Baini whatever- she broke all those vows that an Indian sister takes to protect her brothers.

Lets forget about her brothers and come to her sisters- the women folk of West Bengal - The string of rape cases in her home state and her reactions to them haven’t made her too popular either. By branding most rape cases to have been fabricated “to tarnish the image of the TMC led government”, her personal image is what is being tarnished. In one case Didi even went on to accuse a rape victim of fabricating the story on the behalf of her husband whom she alleged was a CPM supporter. The fact is that the victim is actually a widow who lost her husband 11 years back...can anyone beat this!!!! And guess what? TMC had trumpeted the spectacular electoral victory of “Didi” in West Bengal as being a victory for all the women in the state. Such irresponsible statements from her have been several but Himalayan Times cannot afford another two pages to accommodate all of them here.

**Her U turns have been many- the Maoist issue, the Railways, the FDI in retail, her dealing with Congress (I), her policy on public loans taken by the sate, her attitude towards investors into the state, the land acquisition issues, on the GTA polls- all have experienced her yo-yo like swing in her policies. Bengal can only just hope that the yo-yo doesn’t snap into two.**

Lets come closer home now- mamatadi had with so much fan fare proclaimed that Darjeeling would be transferred into Switzerland.. noble intentions, one would be tempted to call this proclamation of hers. Sadly despite ten months elapsing since her grand announcement, Darjeeling is sliding further towards becoming another Congo or Somalia or Ethiopia, rather than transforming itself into Switzerland. This very column, ten months back, had asked if she had the resources, will and intentions to transform Darjeeling into Switzerland. I guess the pitiful condition of the NH55, filth and stench of Darjeeling town, the acute traffic problems, the crumbling tourists infrastructure, to name a few, answers the questions that this column had asked. Forget Switzerland- Darjeeling would be lucky if it continues breathing...

Her U turns have been many- the Maoist issue, the Railways, the FDI in retail, her dealing with Congress (I), her policy on public loans taken by the sate, her attitude towards investors in the state, the land acquisition issues, on the GTA polls- all have experienced her yo-yo like swing in her policies. Bengal can only just hope that the yo-yo doesn’t snap into two.

Unfortunately, despite what the GJM may want us to believe, Darjeeling hills, (GTA or no GTA) is as much a part of this very West Bengal as Midnapur or Purulia or Bakhura, which Hitler Didi treats as her Nazi-dom. So much for “MAA” “MATI” and the poor “MAANUS” of West Bengal.

This definitely was not the “poriborthan” (change) the people of west Bengal had hoped for- we in Darjeeling can only just say- “SAME HERE TOO” but saying further would be injurious to my health and whatever little property I have, so let me withdraw my hands from this snake pit before its too late. ■

follow himalayantimes on  
**facebook**®

## CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEE TO STATEHOOD - FIFTH AND SIXTH SCHEDULE ONLY

Apropos : Govt rules out forming States Commission to create small states New Delhi, Mar 15 (PTI)

In the very inception it maybe pointed out whether another State Reorganisation Commission, if at all is required in order to create new states, irrespective of the size small or big, given the understanding that any new state formation is a legally guaranteed provision of constitutional dispensation provided only for the safeguard of people of certain areas in India. The constitutional legality of safeguard, meaning protection of the fundamental rights of these citizens were well imbued and constructed initially by the British in the Govt. of India Act 1935 and Order 1936 by the meaning and administrative provisions of "Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas". The contents of which were forwarded and transferred to the Constitution of India under the Sixth Schedule [Article 244(2) & 275(1)] and Fifth Schedule [Article (244 (1)] respectively.

There were in total 36 Excluded (8) and Partially Excluded (28) Areas, which prior to 1935 we broadly termed as Backward Tracts since 1870-1935, and which areas it is perceived were outside the polity of British India (15 Provinces) just as the Princely States (562). From the time of Indian Independence in 1947, almost all the Princely states acceded to the new federation of India under amendment and extension of treaty terms existing with the British Indian Govt. and accordingly amalgamated with the new Indian states. The 36 Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas however, for all practical purposes, were British territories under the Crown and therefore not within the jurisdiction of the Constituent Assembly of India (1946), but reckoned as foreign territories and placed under the charge of



**Darjeeling District being within the provision of Fifth Schedule does not form a component territory of West Bengal but only preserved in the State of West Bengal for purposes of administration and law on and behalf of the President of India represented by the Governor of the State.**

the Governor General/Viceroy 1947-1950 and thereafter placed under the President of India vide the implications of (a). The Indian Independence Act 1947, (b). The (Foreign) Jurisdiction Act 1947 and (c). The India (Provisional Constitution) Order 1947.

The three documents in consort imply areas under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules are now legally under the charge of the President of India and which in time require to be integrated into the federal structure of the Indian Union in process of time, legally as a democratic process. Practically all the Sixth Schedule Areas were en-bloque incorporated in Assam State from which (5) new states were created along the lines defined by the Constituent Assembly Advisory

Sub Committee chaired by G.N. Bardoloi in 1947. In a similar stance (10) new states originated complying the Fifth Schedule provision as propounded by the deliberation of the other Advisory Sub Committee chaired by A.V. Thakkar during the same period.

From the above context one may derive the process by which the new states were created as per constitutional provision and guarantee, and to effect which it is summarily presumed the Constitution (Fifth Amendment) Act 1955 was enacted, which reads as follows, "The amendment made a change in Article 3 so as to empower President to specify a time limit for state legislatures to convey their views on the proposed Central laws

affecting areas, boundaries etc if their states". In common parlance the Act implies the President has the sole authority (in charge of the areas within the Fifth and Sixth Schedules) to allow permission incorporating these areas into the Union of India. The States in which these areas are seen to have been incorporated for administration is within the meaning of the Govt. of India Absorbed Area (Laws) Act 1954. This Act clearly defines the distinct identity of these areas vis a vis the incorporating Indian State. In other words, Darjeeling District being within the provision of Fifth Schedule does not form a component territory of West Bengal but only preserved in the State of West Bengal for purposes of administration and law on and behalf of the President of India represented by the Governor of the State.

The role of the President of India is paramount in considering Article 3 of the Constitution of India. It provides the information that only the President of India has the legal right to create new states and that too, only those mentioned within the folds of the Fifth and Sixth Schedules. Parliament can only assist by organizing the body of implementation viz. the State Reorganisation Commission (SRC). The Article also implies conversely, in a sense, the President's right to initiate new states are subject to limitations of the Constitution. i.e. to apply the legality of state formation specific to the areas safeguarded in the Fifth and Sixth Schedule only.

It is a figment of imagination to consider demanding any new states without possessing the legal guarantee of the safeguarding provisions of the Fifth and Sixth Schedules. It is also a factual perception that no new states besides those areas mentioned in the Fifth and Sixth Schedules, even dream of demanding a new state till Census 2025 AD when both the Houses of Parliament are required to be revamped in order to accommodate the increasing surplus in population by delimiting the Parliamentary constituencies. It therefore stands to reason at this point of time, only Telangana and Darjeeling District constitutionally legally qualify in demanding states. Telangana on basis of its unconstitutional incorporation of amalgamation, and Darjeeling District on basis of its constitutional appropriately- the Fifth Schedule.

Therefore the perception is Darjeeling District under provision of the Fifth Schedule is required at any time after the promulgation of the Constitution in 1950 to demand incorporation, democratically, into the Union of India as a constitutionally guaranteed right. Considering this aspect, the various utterances made by the leaders that be in the State, that, in no account Darjeeling District will be allowed separation outside the geographical boundaries and the administration of the State, is a hollowed drum without any decibel, let alone confer to any beat, only audible to the concerting ears, that too in a sense of subjective imagination.

In order to implement the constitutional function and role of the Fifth and Sixth Schedules, "The Constitutional (Seventh Amendment) Act 1956" was further provided on basis of SRC being given the authority by Parliament to structure a guide line of new state formation as per the parameters of the 5 clauses mentioned therein of Article 3. Parliament on the other hand, on basis of Article 246 section (3) and (4) invokes the Seventh Schedule (State List) to make laws and regulations to operate the administration of the impending new states.

It would therefore be improper for Minister of State for Home Gurudas Kamat to declare unilaterally that, because it had not received any proposal from any State Govt. for new state creation, does not least mean that Telangana and Darjeeling District will be deprived of its constitutional guaranteed right. Secondly it is also a misnomer when the Minister of State gives reasons, as depending on the felt need and general consensus only then the legal constitutional right as the crucial sanction is only speaking half the truth. The constitutional legality of statehood demand is primarily based on the factors related to the provision of the Fifth and Sixth Schedules without which state formation is an impossibility. In conclusion it

maybe confidently declared Telangana and Darjeeling District will be given their rightful place in the union of India after the completion and issue of the new Census report 2011. ■

**There were in total 36 Excluded (8) and Partially Excluded (28) Areas, which prior to 1935 we broadly termed as Backward Tracts since 1870-1935, and which areas it is perceived were outside the polity of British India (15 Provinces) just as the Princely States (562).**

**Only Telangana and Darjeeling District constitutionally legally qualify in demanding states. Telangana on basis of its unconstitutional incorporation of amalgamation, and Darjeeling District on basis of its constitutional appropriately- the Fifth Schedule.**





## SALIENT FEATURES

- v Income tax exemption limit raised to Rs.2 lakh to provide relief of Rs.2,000 for all assessee; 20 per cent tax on income over Rs.10 lakh, up from Rs.8 lakh.
- v Deduction of up to Rs.10,000 from interest from savings bank accounts.
- v Defence to get Rs.1.93 lakh crore during 2012-13.
- v Service tax rate raised from 10 per cent to 12 per cent to bring in Rs.18,660 crore.
- v Number of proactive steps taken on black money (stashed away abroad); information has started flowing in, prosecution to be initiated; White Paper in current session.
- v No change in corporate taxes but measures to enable them better access funds.
- v Withholding tax on external commercial borrowings reduced from 20 per cent to 5 per cent for power, airlines, roads, bridges, affordable houses and fertiliser sectors.
- v National Skill Development Fund allocated Rs.1,000 crore.
- v Four thousand residential quarters to be constructed for paramilitary forces with an allocation of Rs.1,185 crore.
- v National Population Register to be completed in two years.
- v Excise duty raised from 10 to 12 per cent.
- v Cinema industry exempted from service tax.
- v Branded silver jewellery fully exempted from excise duty.
- v Customs duty on warning systems/track upgrade equipment for railways reduced from 10 per cent to 7.5 per cent.
- v Import duty on equipment for iron ore mining reduced from 7.5 to 2.5 per cent.
- v Allocation of Rs.200 crore for research on climate change.
- v Irrigation and water resource company to be operationalised.
- v National mission on food processing to be started in cooperation with state governments.
- v Integrated Child Development Scheme to be strengthened and restructured with allocation of Rs.15,850 crore.
- v Allocation of Rs.14,000 crore for rural water supply and sanitation.
- v Infusion of Rs.15,888 crore in public sector banks, regional rural banks and NABARD in 2012-13.
- v Infrastructure will require Rs.50 lakh crore in 12th Plan, half of this from the private sector.
- v Completion of highway projects 44 per cent higher than in previous fiscal.
- v External commercial borrowing of up to \$1 billion permitted for airline sector.
- v External commercial borrowings permitted to low-cost housing sector.
- v From 2012-13, full subsidies for providing food security; in other sectors to the extent the economy can bear this.
- v Hope to raise Rs.30,000 crore from disinvestments.
- v New equity savings scheme to provide for income tax deduction of 50 per cent for those who invest Rs.50,000 in equity and whose annual income is less than Rs.10 lakh.
- v Corporate market reforms to be initiated.
- v Bills on micro-finance institutions, national land bank and public debt management among those to be introduced in 2012-13.
- v Addressing malnutrition, black money and corruption in public life among five priorities in year ahead.
- v India's inflation structural, driven largely by agricultural constraints.
- v Current account deficit 3.6 per cent in 2011-12; this put pressure on exchange rate.
- v Growth in 2012-13 estimated at 7.6 per cent; expect inflation to be lower.



# GORKHA TRAGEDY ACT-II

By Arun Acharya

Gorkhaland is a bad dream and a sad one to boot. It is bad because chances of its materialization are slim. It is sad because it is too long and renders it inane.

Wake up, people of Darjeeling!! For now Gorkhaland is dead. Long Live Gorkhaland!! The attempt by Ghising to exhume it from the sarcophagus called the "Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council" after twenty years in it in order to seal it permanently in the tomb of the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution led to its resurrection and raised hopes to the dying dream. The splinter of an ambitious malcontent aid-de camp from Ghising's outfit to spearhead the resurrection into a potent movement appears now, for all to see, to be a fake. The body Gorkhaland lying in stupor is being removed from the old, weathered sarcophagus to a new one, nothing more, nothing less- but fearfully of an inferior quality.

Darjeeling is in the state of West Bengal by default. It was the penchant of the British for the cooler climes of back home, to get away from the summer heat of sultry Bengal, that it was made the Summer Seat of the Governor of Bengal in British India. So much has been written on the history of Darjeeling

that I need not ride on it again. In short, what comprises this district was a part of Sikkim, overrun and annexed by Nepal under the regime of the expansionist *House of Gorkha*, snatched out of a truncated Nepal after a two-year Anglo-Gurkha War by the British and given over to Sikkim as gratitude for its assistance in the War and again taken back from Sikkim for sanatoria purposes. Kalimpong was taken from Bhutan as a punishment for marauding Bhutanese spoliates in British and pro- British neighbourhoods.

Darjeeling Hills was developed by the British in the interest of the British and the local inhabitants: aboriginals and settlers from neighbouring Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan who were brought in to man the myriads of tea garden, as a steady work force and to clear

**Darjeeling area is in the state of West Bengal by default. It was the penchant of the British for the cooler climes of back home, to get away from the summer heat of sultry Bengal, that it was made the Summer Seat of the Governor of Bengal in British India**

the backwoods for farming. Darjeeling with this assorted Hill Community was insulated from the rest of Bengal by categorizing the District formed in 1866 as "Non-Regulated", Excluded Area", "Scheduled District", "Backward Tracts" and "Partially Excluded Area" at different points of time. All power lay in the hands of the Executive, i.e the Governor, and was out of the purview of the Legislature of Bengal. This persisted till the end of the British rule. And the area had an epithet tagged as "British Sikkim" or "British Bhutan" as popular usage among the intellectuals and the ruling class.

To understand how disputed the Darjeeling area is, one must recognize the fact that immediately on the aftermath of Indian Independence, there was a beeline of claimants for Darjeeling. Nepal, Bhutan, and Sikkim asked the Indian Government to return to them what was rightfully theirs. And surprises of all surprises- to the consternation of those who are reading this, the Tibetans in October 1947 formally asked India to return a wide swathe of Indian Territory that included Darjeeling.

The process of total absorption of Darjeeling into West Bengal began only after the Indian Independence. Bengali politicians were sore after the division of Bengal and a large chunk of the Bengali (Muslim) populace became East Pakistan. If merely on the basis of religion India, and more particularly the Bengalis, acquiesced to the partition of their land and blood brothers into another country, why should they clamour, obstruct and raise a hue and cry to release a territory that is totally different ethnically, linguistically, culturally and historically from the rest of Bengal? This is most unreasonable. Once, when a



delegation from Darjeeling had gone to request the Assam Chief Minister, Mr Gopinath Bordoloi, to have Darjeeling absorbed into Assam, a hardnosed Bengali politician, Shyam Prasad Mukherjee, chided the delegates asserting that like any other State, Bengal needed its hill station. Colonial Psychopathy!!

The hill-billies have been looked down by Bengali *Netas* and *Babus* as uncivilized, barbaric, graceless and harum-scarum. The people and the place have been so marginalized after independence that comparatively there has been a continuing slide-down in the area of development. Three and a half decades of Bengali bourgeois communism has crippled Darjeeling so extensively that it is merely a ramshackle of what it once was. Darjeeling is a ghost of its past. The grandeur that once inspired surrounding Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan and the nearby plains is now a run-down, squalid shanty town beset with unsolvable civic and hygienic problems.

It is natural for a minority community regarded as inferior for reasons of ethnic, cultural and linguistic pattern to want recognition. The geographical location and topographic difficulties and backwardness of the area needs special attention towards it. Unconcern and negligence as the attitude of the government of West Bengal to it has alienated the people. No amount of false reasoning will appease the genuine outrage of the people. One need only look to the other side of the Teesta-Rangit boundary and see the extent of deprivation.

Two decades of hibernation, under "The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council" deteriorated the ambience of the hills. The social structure has crumbled; work

culture and good social order have become a thing of the past. Darjeeling is in doldrums and its goal has been blurred.

Although the Gorkhaland movement had its genesis in 1907, the real hardball was played from 1986. Ghising was able to mobilize the suppressed remorse of the people and transformed it into a rage of vehemence. The going was hard and the road uncharted. For Bengal it was a bolt from the blue and the rude shock drove Bengal out of its wits. Subhas Ghising played his cards right.

Bengal unleashed unprecedented State suppression, used every means available to thwart the movement and also let loose a reign of terror by filtering in criminals and bad characters to demoralize the people and vitiate the intensity of the people's fervor. People bore it bravely, suffered without grudge or complaint. And they rallied round him as though he were a messiah.

The movement ended in an anti-climax. It appeared to be a sell- out. It was beyond Ghising's capacity to carry it out in the right direction. Darjeeling had become the muddy trampling ground in the proxy combat between Communist Bengal and the Congress-ruled Central Government. It so transpired that the Centre stopped piggy-backing Ghising after its debacle in the Bengal Legislative elections and check mated him to accept a semi-autonomous hill

**The movement ended in an anti-climax. It appeared to be a sell- out. It was beyond Ghising's capacity to carry it out in the right direction. Darjeeling had become the muddy trampling ground in the proxy combat between Communist Bengal and the Congress-ruled Central Government. It so transpired that the Centre stopped piggy-backing Ghising after its debacle in the Bengal Legislative elections**

council that was worked out in a consensus between West Bengal and the Central Government. As for the people, they were taken for a ride.

**A HILL COUNCIL!** Unworkable, because of the apathy of the State Government. Fund -blockade. High and dry! Run haywire because of unrealistic workings and fund-crunch. Even in a field like Agriculture, no agricultural inputs such as planting material, fertilizers and other equipments were provided. Funds were diverted and channeled to Emergency Construction. Contractors. Misuse of funds. Nexus of contractors and Councilors!! People seethed through the tyranny and were voiceless. Instead of taking up the Gorkhaland issue, the Ali Baba and his thieves looted the money that came for the people without compunction. The West Bengal Government gleed, happy that so-called leaders had forgotten the Movement and concentrated in the loot. Ghising went paranoid and came up with phony antics of "*No Mans Land*", "*Greater Nepal*", "*opposition of inclusion of Nepali language in the Eight schedule of the Constitution*," "*a satellite township*" and so on. Gradually he lost touch with reality orienting himself to the cult of shamanism, declaring earthquakes to be good for Darjeeling and the bougainvillea flower to be a panacea for all ailments and soul purifying, telepathic communion with Sai Baba, banning idols in public Poojas and then again allowing them, taking baskets of millet ferments as offerings to the Hindu god, Ganesha. When bored, he came up with an action movie type act of being attacked to incarcerate a potential challenger. And on, and on like taking the Darjeeling issue to the Hague with the false assurances of some wily lawyers of Nepal.

And the Sixth Schedule bogey. And nemesis!!

Bimal Gurung, the leader of the second phase of the hardball game



of Gorkhaland came out as a new dedicated firebrand. Once more hopes kindled in the hearts of the crestfallen people who rallied around him. The “Sixth Schedule” issue was vehemently opposed and Ghising was thrown out of the Darjeeling scene. A new lease was given to the movement but, for all purposes and for everyone to see, has turned out to be a sham.

The “Sixth Schedule” antagonism went well with the people at Darjeeling and they put him on the high pedestal to lead them. But it was Darjeeling Hills confined. The intellectuals around him could not put forward a rational opposition to the Parliamentary Committee examining it. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs examining the Sixth Schedule issue vis-à-vis Darjeeling Gorkha Hills in the concluding paragraph of its Reports writes “*The Committee recommends that the Constitution( One hundred and seven amendment Bill, 2007) be passed taking into account amendments suggested in this chapter and the observations made in chapter VII*”.

The GJMM misled the people of Darjeeling into believing that the Sixth Schedule issue for Darjeeling had been dropped. They have kept on repeating this.

The fact is that the Sixth Schedule issue has been recommended to be passed by the Parliamentary Standing Committee. The report was presented to the Rajya Sabha on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2008 and laid on the table of the Lok Sabha on the same day to be debated sometime in the first week of march, 2008 and the ruling UPA on the special initiatives taken by Pranab Mukherjee and Priyaranjan Dasgupta to get it passed. Priyaranjan Dasgupta had stated that he made it sure that the

Bill would be passed by a thumping majority in the Lower House. But it could not be done and has been kept on hold for another reason. The truth is that it hangs over like a sword of Damocles over the fate of Darjeeling.

One by one the GJMM has faltered in the steps they have taken and instead of nearing the realization of Gorkhaland, they are distancing it.

1. Getting a Non local MP elected for the Lok Sabha for all the wrong reasons.
2. Trying to somehow grab power in the hills for further misuse by attempting to get an Interim Set-up.
3. The Dooars and Terai and the Adhivasi issue GAATA, which has ended in a fiasco.
4. They have, it appears, completely lost the power to bargain with the State and Central governments after Madan Tamang was murdered.
5. And finally the GTA, which in all fairness will be the last nail in the coffin where Gorkhaland has been put.
6. They should concede that they have tried their best and are no longer able to get out of the labyrinth they are in.

**The fact is that the Sixth Schedule issue has been recommended to be passed by the Parliamentary Standing Committee. The report was presented to the Rajya Sabha on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2008 and laid on the table of the Lok Sabha on the same day to be debated sometime in the first week of march, 2008 and the ruling UPA on the special initiatives taken by Pranab Mukherjee and Priyaranjan Dasgupta to get it passed.**

The famous words of Abraham Lincoln “**You can fool some people for all the time, all the people for some time but you cannot fool all the people all the time**”, are not meaningless.

The Gorkhaland cause has all the ingredients and the right stuff. History, language, demography, geography provides it. And the constitution of India legitimizes it.

Then what is wrong??? What is lacking??? Why is the legitimate aspiration of the people simply remaining an unfulfilled dream??? **First great failure. Second great failure!!** Hopes piled upon hope branching off to despair, transforming it to vapour to be blown off by malevolent winds. Vacuum!!! Stark vacuum!!!

But this is against the law of Nature. There always is tremendous pressure around any vacuum and until the vacuum is filled, the pressure remains.

The issue will be raised again and again because it is right and will succeed when a leader of absolute integrity, education, dedication, honesty and good strong roots emerges and one who really understands the polemics and Parliamentary power-play in Delhi. Men and women of real mettle should assist the leadership with the right stuff. No half heartedness, no slimy sycophancy, above simple grabs and no boot-licking pseudo intellectualism.

If the movement and the movements of the future is just for grabs, the dream will end in nightmares.

So, it is time for the people of the Darjeeling Hills to really go the Socrates way with a lit lantern in broad daylight to look around.

**AND ACT III???? ■**



# Your Name it, You have it...

By Anjali Sharma

Women, the mysterious masterpiece of the creator, the ultimate symbol of power who brings forth a new life and nurtures it and the world progresses. At different ages and centuries there have been multivarious opinions of the opposite sex on her beauty, behavior and her life. But flowing along with time she has proved herself worthy of the virtues she upholds. She is a mother, a friend, a sister and a caring and forgiving wife. A Woman may belong to any community, cast, creed, religion or nation but she is always who she believes she is. No field is left untouched by her hand. The first meal for a child, first grace for the family and all that follows. You just name a thing and there you have it—a woman standing behind its overall success.

And if we have to dwindle down to our own little town by focusing our complete attention on the women of hills or the Gorkhay *chelis*, they have been a symbol of woman empowerment since olden days till our present time. She has raised her children, has done all the household chores, has even walked to the jungles to collect firewood and the best education she has offered her children is morality, but it must be noted that the “times” have changed along with the hands of clock, the trends have changed and the children are now receiving knowledge of modern technology and book along with virtues and morality served at home.

Women followed the advice of their mothers, aunts and relatives which were handed down from one generation to the other. At that time she may have rocked her child in a cane woven cradle unknowing of the fact that the hand that rocks the cradle is also the same hand that rules the world. The barriers of old crippled beliefs and unworthy traditions have been broken down with changing time. A woman in every way is a success.

Endless care for her child, a sister who fights with her brother on petty matters but at the bottom of heart loves him, tears falling from her eyes as she forgives her husband and a girl who gives up everything for the sake of her family, these are the true spirits of women where her virtues shine with the brightest of light. When a chance is provided to a woman she sets her mind and spirit in such a manner that they are able to wander even outside the strong walls of a prison and are unstoppable.

By giving way to new ideas of revolution women all over the world are letting their mind and spirit soar high in the zenith. A similar opinion may not be obtained on how the rights, affection and respect should be made priority for a woman from Man's side but the basic starts with simple gestures. She may be in any sector in terms of her professional career in which she is always bound to perform better than men. But one must understand that at the end of the day she also craves the same love and care that she bestows on her

family and friends. This is one essential factor required for the growth of women empowerment because if a woman is happy the world will always be a happy place.

We should pat ourselves our backs and bask in the glory of living in a town to good schools and colleges and encouraged to work and earn for rather than marrying them and hands off them with sums of matter of fact our girls are even make their own choices regarding marriage. It is unjust to think of her as a weaker sex because when God created Adam, Adam couldn't survive alone thus Eve was created to save Adam. They work hand in hand with men and are considered equal.

Literature, science, politics and society nothing has been able to resist the touch of a woman. Being a female is the greatest boon one can ever imagine. Every kind of field and tasks have given a chance to make ideas of the mind a reality in a woman's life. Therefore come 8<sup>th</sup> march, every year, and there is a air flow in the valley, celebrations for woman's day originally known as international working women's day for world wide respect, appreciation and love towards women for economic, political and social achievement. Quite amazingly the day is an amalgam of mothers day and valentines day, and holds different feelings in the heart of individuals. This women's day let's keep aside every bit of bitter reality issues such as rapes assaults on women which are demeaning ones. Let us only focus on the brighter and greener pastures taking a view into the optimism that a woman possesses.

A deeper gratitude must grow in our hearts for what we have which are all because of women and their vision. Cheers to the education institutions founded and run by women. The female teachers who are debonair along with which they are a perfect idol to the society. Also as a writer presenting her imagination clashes with reality in books and setting up inspirations. Last but not the least let's rejoice for the Gorkhay *chelis* we had among us and still do and who contributed morality as the greatest social victory. Finally all we hold is a big praise for the best partner of a man, a perfectionist in every task and a symbol of divinity that she truly is. ■



# 10 Questions



**SISTER BINDYA SUBBA**  
Senior Sister Tutor

## 1. Your childhood days

I spent a normal childhood. I used to enjoy songs and dance. Whenever there was a circus, I would imitate what I had seen very keenly. As my father and brother were strict, many of the activities were restricted. But every night I used to have a dream where I flew alone above everyone in the world. And for very long time I used to have this same dream every night.

## 2. Your role model/ inspiration

Some senior writers. My late mother and my God, Sir Sathya Sai Baba whose teachings I follow. He is the poet of all poets.

## 3. Writings/ stories which inspire you

'Maiya saheb' - by Bhawani Bhikchu, 'Bipana Katipay' - by Indrabadhur Rai and 'The Blue Mimesa' (Siris K Singh Moktan).

## 4. Is Politics responsible for the degradation of Society?

Not only politics but there are other factors as well. Education is a must in order to improve the society but

we have become very casual and not serious about it. Our goals and objectives must be set wide.

## 5. Your say on fiction

The Nepali literature has crossed the stage of fiction and now it reflects the image of the living society, i.e., the reality. Fiction is made up of literature based on imagination which is mixed with art.

## 6. A book is able to change a person's life

Reading a book gives more power than spoken words. A good book is a good friend, a guide and a philosopher. For example in Mahatma Gandhi's case. The Bhagavad Gita enlightened him and showed him the way.

## 7. Your Friendship with Parijat

I was 20 years junior to her but we shared a great friendship. She has been a loving figure who has highly influenced me. Her words of inspiration will remain with me forever.

## 8. Your success as a woman

I have struggled a lot in life. We do not exactly get what we desire for but with time our thoughts mature and we have job satisfaction. A person who has no respect for her/his job can do nothing. As a nurse I am among young girls to whom I impart lessons which helps them become good people. I am happy with what I do as I offer my best to these young girls.

## 9. A message for all the women

Life should be taken seriously by a woman. She must be able to take a stand for herself and should not just depend on the 'Quotas'. She has to struggle on her own. Women may be in any field of work but they must be serious regarding what they do. They should also have a beauty filled in their soul.

## 10. Some words for Himalayan Times

Himalayan Times is trying to walk with time. Its focus on the traditional and historical aspects of the Darjeeling Hills is highly appreciated. It is also a very bold journal. ■



## Peoples Poll

### What is so Special about a woman ???

"No matter how tough or difficult the situation they (women) are tolerant and because of this power to tolerate, things get settled in a peaceful manner without any violence."

—Binay Ghising, 38

"Caring, loving and very sensitive"

—Kumar Chamling, 58

"Depth of an ocean can be measured but the depth of a woman's love is immeasurable"

— Nima Tamang, 33

"Ladies are very talented and farsighted because they take their children to school. We highly appreciate and respect them."

Dalim Pradhan 68

"if a woman says she will, she actually does it."

—Prem Chettri, 46

"My mother gave birth to me and she always taught me to do things in a proper manner."

—Prajwal Tamang, 19

"Man is incomplete without a woman"

—Raj ghimiray, 19

"The role of a woman as a mother is supreme she is the ultimate source of inspiration."

—sagar Rai, 25

"Nothing at all"

—Rakesh pradhan, 30

"A woman bears a lot and also sacrifices for her family, husband and her children."

—Kelsang chawang Nhutia, 22

"She is supportive, caring and is always present in every step of my life."

—Sindesh Pardhan, 23

"she leaves her parent's house and adjusts with her in laws. This is the greatest amongst all sacrifices".

—Bindhanjan Kazi Pradhan, 23

"She completes her responsibility and she is Honest."

—Salem Bhujel, 21

"She runs the household and takes full responsibility of children, she can be a Prime Minister of a country, Chief Minister and even on the frontier as a jawan."

—Kishore Sharma, 45

"She is caring, loving, helpful but above all what counts is that she wants to see everyone happy."

—Suvaksha Sharma, 14

"She runs the earth by giving a new life to a baby as a mother."

—Tabna Barailly, 19

"She sacrifices her happiness for the sake of others. She plays multiple roles in a single lifetime."

—jyoti Gazmer, 19yrs.

"she gives up everything and her love is unconditional."

—Kiran Gazmer, 20

"A woman is the best partner of a man. Thus a woman is behind every successful man"

—S.T BHUTIA, 60

"As little girl, a sister and a mother she earns the deserved respect."

—Tirtha Kr.Chettri, 72

"The upliftment of the generation lies in the hands of women and that's why they are called the mother of the land."

—Lakpa Bittu tamang, 24

"There have has no limits."

—kesang, 16

"They are quite emotional because they understand things better than boys."

—Diwakar thapa, 15

"My mother is very beautiful. I wish that my future life will be like her."

—Ashwin lohar, 17

"I have no words to describe girls"

—Sohail Paruez, 18

"My sister is sharing and is a friend to me."

—obed, 18

"Every woman (as a mother) feeds her child first."

—Rohit Mahato, 17

"A woman is a symbol of inspiration and love in the form of a sister, mother and a wife."

—Daniel Lepcha, 21

"A Woman is a MOTHER, WIFE and A DAUGHTER- CARING, LOVING and BEAUTIFUL."

—Goldy Sitling, 36

"Women can create HISTORY"

—Gopal Tamang, 60

"they are progressive"

—Geeta Tamang, 45

"Women are like the wheels of a chariot."

—Hemant Gurung, 40





## KALIMPONG GIRLS' HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

EDUCATING YOUNG MINDS SINCE MORE  
THAN A CENTURY



**The Editor,  
Himalayan  
Times**

**Post Box 49,  
Kalimpong  
03552-255448  
9832016738**

[himalayantimes@rediffmail.com](mailto:himalayantimes@rediffmail.com)  
[himalayantimes@gmail.com](mailto:himalayantimes@gmail.com)

[www.himalayantimes.co.in](http://www.himalayantimes.co.in)  
[www.kalimponghimalayantimes.blogspot.com](http://www.kalimponghimalayantimes.blogspot.com)

## April Fools Day

**A**ll Fool's Day, also known as April Fool's Day, is celebrated annually on the first day of April. It is a time for the traditional playing of pranks upon unsuspecting people...the victim of such a prank being called an April Fool.

The origins of this custom are somewhat uncertain, but may have initially been related to the arrival of Spring in late March, at which time Mother Nature is said to "fool" the human race with sudden and fickle changes in the weather...showers one minute and sunshine the next. The playing of practical jokes, however, dates back to Ancient Rome and such activities were an integral part of the Hilaria celebrations held on March 25, a celebration which would again appear to be associated with the coming of Spring and the Vernal Equinox, held to honor the resurrection of Attis, Roman God of Vegetation who was linked to the seasonal cycle. In England, an ancient legend states that April Fool's Day commemorates the fruitless mission of the Rook (or European Crow) which was sent out in search of land from Noah's flood-encircled ark.

It is generally accepted that the All Fool's Day tradition began in France during the Sixteenth Century, when the beginning of the New Year was observed on April 1 and was celebrated in much the same way as New Year is today with parties and dancing late into the night. At that time, the festivities ran for a week, beginning on March 25, and included the exchanging of gifts. In 1582, however, during the reign of King Charles IX, Pope Gregory introduced a revised calendar for the Christian world wherein the New Year fell on January 1. Since it took some time, possibly even years, for many people to even hear word of the change (communications being what they were in the Sixteenth Century) and since others obstinately refused to



accept such reform or simply forgot, New Year's Day continued to be celebrated on the first day of April in many areas. Individuals who had accepted the dates of the new calendar played tricks on those who had not and referred to the unfortunate victims of such pranks as "April Fools," sending them on a "fool's errand" (an invitation to a non-existent party, for example) or attempting to make them believe that something which was true was actually false. Over time, this practice evolved into an annual tradition of April 1 prank-playing, eventually migrating to England and Scotland during the Eighteenth Century and thus, introduced to the American colonies by British and French settlers.

Some historians maintain that the development of All Fool's Day is linked to the medieval Feast of Asses or Feast of Fools, and the latter certainly was a most popular French festival. It does, however, seem unlikely that such a feast day was associated in any manner with the New Year in this instance, since such celebrations occurred at the time of the Feast of the Circumcision on January 1 which, during medieval times, was not the date of the New Year (under the Julian calendar, the New Year was celebrated in March). With the passage of time, it is far from easy to now distinguish between the Feast of Fools and the Feast of Asses, which may also have been celebrated in

January. Many church dignitaries were honored on specific feast days during the Christmas season...the deacons on December 26 (Saint Stephen's Day), the priests on December 27 (Saint John's Day), the choristers and mass-servers on December 28 (Day of the Holy Innocents) and the sub-deacons on January 1 (Feast of the Circumcision). Later, the feast of the sub-deacons was replaced by the Guild of Fools, the customs and buffoonery of which then became associated with the sub-deacons' festivities and most likely had their origins in earlier Pagan customs, such as the Roman Saturnalia (celebrated in December), when slaves were granted temporary equality with their masters. During the Feast of Asses, the preacher impersonated the Hebrew prophets while arguing the Divinity of Christ. This sermon evolved into a drama, including actors and a procession which incorporated the riding of an ass (most probably symbolized by a hobby horse) into the church. This lavish spectacle was greatly appreciated and enjoyed by the parishioners...so much so, that it eventually developed separately until the festival became known as the Feast of Asses and, in its turn, gradually became absorbed into the Feast of Fools. The Feast of Fools was later outlawed by the Church in some areas due to the licentious behavior of the congregation during this time.

In many cultures, tradition dictates that the pranking period must expire at noon on April 1 and any jokes attempted after that hour will bring back luck to the perpetrator. In addition, any who fail to respond with a good humor to tricks played upon them are said to attract bad luck unto themselves. Such victims are, however, entitled to "turn the tables" after the hour of noon with the retort: *"April Fool's gone past...and you're the biggest fool at last!"* It should be noted that not all April Fool superstitions are negative. Males who are fooled by a pretty female, for example, are said to be fated to marry the girl...or at least enjoy a healthy friendship with her. ■



# First love of the hills

C M Lal remember his first break as a pre-Independence DHR foreman

**I**t was a misty winter morning when I took the Toy Train to Tin Dharia, a small village on the slope along Hill Cart Road en route Darjeeling. I had been posted there after what was called the 'probational peeling off' at Jamalpur. The year was 1933.

Shivering and still shaky after a bumpy ride I entered the office of superintendent Ullick Brown and was instantly greeted by a hearty: "Good morning, young man!" before me was Brown, a middle aged, stalky Anglo-Indian, a good deal shorter than me, (since I am 6ft 2 inches) but a man of great charisma. Dismissing with ceremony he commanded me to accompany him to "be introduced to Tiny". We made our way to the locoshed where he gestured to a cute little locomotive flaunting a name plate inscribed "TINY". "Do you know, how old she is?" asked Brown and himself proceeded to provide the answer. "Completing her 53<sup>rd</sup> year today. Fatigued, hill-sick, she is being rested here. "Respectfully, he strode back, this time to show me my lodgings.

Brown and I were to stay in two cottages side by side. His cottage was somewhat bigger than mine with a well kept lawn sprinkled with daisies, phloxes, cineraria, and rhododendrons and rose



creepers...alien charms to the coarse rural buffoon that I was. "H've a cup of taiee (tea), how's the idea?" he would say and disappear indoors. Moments later he would reappear a helper in tom carrying tea, biscuit and sometimes pieces of chocolate cake. "I make my own tea," Brown had explained on the first day. A bachelor, Brown's constant companion was Peggy, a Bhutanese Apsoo.

It was Brown who told me that when 'Tiny' drew the first train into Tin Dharia in 1880 the locals had spilled out on the road and on the track in wonder. She had traveled all the way from Siliguri Town Station, some 15 miles down the ridge in to the foot hills. A maiden voyage through the sea of Himalayan peaks. Being garlanded, watered and tilaked with the ceremonial vermilion she seemed to have danced to the folk tune. Darjeeling ko sanu rel hiran lagi taris. For two years Tin Dharia was Tiny's last stop till the line was extended to Darjeeling.

Weaving its pattern in gradients and loops Himalayan Railway (DHR) interlaced Kurseong, Gayabari, Jorbanglow, Ghoom, Dorjeeling. The railway Workshop of the DHR always remained at Tin Dharia. Brown ordered me to carry out a clinical check up of the locomotive as soon as it

had climbed up to Tin Dharia and before it climbed down. "Feel the pulse, the lungs and X-ray the limbs" he would advice. I performed the routine twice a day with the other chores of a foreman in the workshop. I often supervised the welding and even now miss Tamang, my welder and his tea. A concoction of tea with

milk, butter and sattu (powdered roasted gram) and salt. It was an elixir in Tamang's hands Tamang also introduced me to chhang, a millet beer served in a bamboo container and sipped through a straw. Later, I came to know that the Army Band at Darjeeling played the tune 'Chhang makes me young'.

I often used to go out to check the line; seated in a trolley and shaded by an umbrella. I noted the gradients, scrutinised the embankments and took stock of the plates. No where else do bumpers play such a vital role in the life of trains, particularly when negotiating gradients. Gradient configurations 150%, 175%, 140% etc appeared to be some essential sequences in the flow of our life.

I still shudder to think of the evenings during the first six months of my stint. With every dusk I had no recourse but to sink into the deep darkness and conspiracy of silence. Brown used to abandon himself to his bottles, his glasses, his 'large' and 'small' pours. Through the part of the night which was





left he slept. I did not know what to do with myself.

Finally, I burrowed an escape every weekend to Kurseong. Lovely retiring room, delicious dinner, thrilling trek through Dow Hill and a cup of Castletron tea at breakfast.

For routine checks of the track I used to visit Darjeeling at least once a month but I never stayed in Darjeeling except once for a month when I was supervising some extension work at the Ghoom station. Darjeeling always seemed too proud, too withdrawn, well beyond my reach. But I remember that during summer months when the Lt Governor of Bengal used to shift to Darjeeling from his capital Calcutta we had the most busy schedule. Trains used to then ply a number of times between Darjeeling and Kurseong. The DHR had extraordinary drivers then, all Nepalese; sprightly, dutiful and fortified by a deep knowledge of the hills.

After a spell of five years I was transferred to the Golden Rock in the Deccan. It took me some twenty years to return to this region first as AME and again after a break in Assam as DME in the Katihar division. In the mean India had attained Independence, and a new unit namely the North East Frontier Railways had come into existence as a substitute for the pre-independent East-Bengal and Assam Railways. It was then that my contact with the Darjeeling Himalayan Railways was reestablished. The

formed Town Station, I found had been almost abandoned. Trains now started and ended their journeys at the new Siliguri Junction Station across the river Mahananda. Later, this station too was shifted to New Jalpaiguri. 'Tiny' was taken down from the Tin Dharia Workshop and lodged in front of the Siliguri Junction Station. Now, I hear that after the DHR was declared by the UNESCO as a heritage railway, old 'Tiny' was shifted to a newly opened museum in Ghoom.

I visited my 'first love' again in 1975, before my pre-retirement transfer to Assam, traveling to Tin Dharia, Kurseong and Darjeeling. The DHR was then 95 years old, I had changed over the years and so had Tin Dharia, Kurseong and Darjeeling. Squatters by the track, crowd, dirt and stories of frequent landslides affecting train communication were new features. During my five years' at Tin Dharia train communication was suspended only once for two days in 1935 due to land-slip.

Brown had been transferred to Bombay soon after I left for Golden Rock. Utterly miserable at being lifted away from the hills he had wilted and died. I heard from colleagues that he had asked to be laid to rest at Tin Dharia. I don't know if that wish was honoured.

It was a pleasant surprise in my retirement, to receive a postal invitation to the DHR centenary celebrations of 1980. And sitting in my village Chhitkia, I was overcome by memories and my ears rang with the old song, "Dorjeeling ko sanu rel".



Mrinalini  
Rai

## On a dull day in London..

It's been little more than 3 weeks since I landed at Heathrow, and I must confess I am in love with London :) I wish I could settle down here.. I have had the time of my life, sometimes a little bit of change does wonders to mankind.

Everyday has been a bright day, although the weather was not very kind but amidst the fog, the view has been even more better. I have indeed learnt the art of optimism. But I must admit that my health has been an area of concern, but who cares, people are just a phone call away!! :)

Today is one of those days, I am sure to get verbose. I am indoors, nothing much to do. Thanks to the migraine attack :(

But as I lie and speculate, I can't help but feel good. Everything here has been perfect, friends have gone out of their way to take me around and work too has been good.

Every morning when I call mom, she is so delighted to know that I am up by 7:00 am. A sense of satisfaction that her daughter is now living a disciplined life. She is thrilled with the fact that I walk a mile to enjoy the scrumptious breakfast.. oooo i love the doughnuts here :) Its a wonderful feeling to walk around, the view is marvellous, everything is so clean and fresh... Life can't get any better..

This vacation of mine has just been so wonderful. The key highlights have been attending a nepali wedding, meeting some of my good friends including meeting Louise n Nigel. One of my very good friends who wanted me to meet his friend here had described his friend as a middle



aged man, bored of London. After 2 weeks of procrastinating visiting him, I finally find time to meet him. I am running late, trying to figure out the way to reach the place, guilty for making him wait in the cold. I book my train tickets back home since it's already 9:00 pm, making the old man drop me didn't sound quite right. I reach the venue, and try looking for him. Suddenly someone taps me. A tall guy greets me.... Boy!! As I look into his lovely blue eyes, I silently curse my friend for not branding his friend well. He looks all of 30, extremely good looking. My red lipstick is slightly out of the place, and in the rush, I had forgotten to comb my hair... :((

We decide to eat some chinese food for dinner. And for the first time in life I regret the fact that I had never taken the pain to learn how to use a chopstick :(I mean I was had lived always closer to China than he had) Quite embarrassing...

He offers to drop me home. I politely decline it, considering that I had already booked my tickets. He insists, so in no time, we walk around. I am disappointed thinking I'll have to walk till the bus stop which is 10 minutes away.. Suddenly he opens the door for me, and I am seated in the swanky BMW :) lol What a perfect evening, roaming heart of London in a BMW :)

On my way back home I realize how I miss my family and some of my closest friends. Alisha Lepcha who tops the list!! I've missed u Alisha... So much to shop around, every time I see a perfect dress, I think of you and quietly check the price tag! Nothing is lesser than 80 pounds... :(( Grish, Prax, Subani, Archu- You guys would

have been really proud of me, I've learnt the art of applying make up now :) lol

Prathibha, Anjoo, Tudu, Mahima, Sandi bhai, Rohan, - Walking around Piccadilly and getting drunk would have been so much fun :)

Panu, Vicky Bhai and Yuvach Da- Watching the football match together with pint of Stella (beer) n gin tonic would have been great.

Nankey- Hunting for the perfect guy for you, somewhere near London eye :) ..

Indrani- Hitting the theatres, reading books at Hyde Park on a lazy afternoon..

Dantan, Reewaj, Jeevan- Watching the stars perform live in concert at O2 arena.. I was there till 2 am last night, that's where stars perform. Amazing!!!

Anthea, Selwin, Matt, Ayesha- I've missed all of u, dancing in the pubs, posing for pics....

And last but not the least my lovely sisters Papus, Roshina and Anu na, Sumi, Apu na.. Shopping for the entire Rai clan in London would've been great.. :)

Then I realize how much I miss India.. how much I miss my hometown Darjeeling! I am suddenly struck with a feeling that I would never trade my beloved hometown and my beloved friends there for anything in the world. I realize with such triumph that my roots will always live in my heart. No matter where I am I'll always think of chowrasta and the tea that you get in plastic cups there. That is who I am at heart. Darjeeling ko keti.. and I shall always be that.. always and forever...

Anyway I will be back next week, with lot of memories and (some gifts I think..) ■





## COOKING DIARY

Prakriti Prabha  
Chettri

When I first proposed the idea of my "The Cooking Diaries" to my editor he seemed occupied. (im afraid to use the word "uninterested" lest I induce wrath). But determined as I was I decided to ensure that it worked out the way I wanted. I love food. Ok, I may weigh 47 kgs but that doesn't mean that I don't enjoy eating. I would like to narcissistically add that many of my close friends have always been envious of the fact that I always make butter and cheese disappear into nothingness, while the same tends to hang on to their love handles. Anyway, the bottom line is, I just love and love and love food. And this is going to be a new journey for me as this idea of mine is going to take me to the homes of people whom I may have crossed without even noticing that they existed while buying "churpi" and "kinema" in Haat Bazaar. And in these homes of these people, I am going to get the opportunity of tasting food made by them in their own unique ways. Yup, this is going to be the yummiest journey of my life. :D



But nothing can be simple as you plan it to be. The one problem that cropped up immediately was that I didn't know whom to start with. It was just an idea that had just hatched in my head but hadn't actually materialized as yet. Nobody knew about it! I was being a narcissist yet again. Therefore after much pondering the best solution that I came up with was to invite myself to my own home and cook for myself. I would myself be my first guest and the narrator of my first chapter of my "The Cooking Diaries". So easy, like slicing butter with a hot knife. Voila! But unfortunately it wasn't as easy and saying it. The way "I will do it myself" rolls off your tongue so beautifully, but when your hands and head have to work together to prepare for a mega event it can make you wish you have never proposed it to the editor in the first place. no wonder he seemed uninter...oops I mean occupied!!!

But, not being one of those who accept defeat easily I started preparing vigorously. The course had to be planned first and I decided that it would be a mix of international and national cuisine. (ooooo I almost sound like a professional here ;) but sounding professional is a far cry from actually being like one. I had initially wanted to prepare a full course lunch, but sadly being quite busy (if only I could tell you with what) I was unable to, thus I settled down for High Tea. I have always enjoyed tea parties, I find them more fun because one can just flitter around with tea and talk to everyone present. I find it more pleasant and compatible; I mean tea, samosa and hot gossip. .mmm lovely combo...one couldn't ask for anything more.

Food is always a great source of comfort. No wonder they say that a way through a mans heart (man as in both men and women, mind you) is through his stomach. It is the same with me. You serve me hot aludum and bhujia on a cold rainy day and my spirit soars higher than from where the rain begin. When I was little my favourite vegetable was only potatoes, but as I grew up I learnt to enjoy the different taste and flavour of different vegetables.

# COOKING DIARIES

Beleive it or not but karela or bitter gourd is my most favourite vegetable now and in the winter time I just love raya saag, so raya had to be one of the ingredient for my special tea. I am really into vegetable and products that are available according to seasons. Thus I prepared a menu accordingly, 1) sandwiches with Chinese sausages, 2) crispy chips made of raaya saag 3) cheese pokora and 4) muffins.

I first started with the cake batter for my muffins. I must make it publicly known that whatever i have learnt to cook comes from my own experience. I have never followed any proper recipe nor have I ever used a cook

book. Whatever information that I have gathered of cooking comes from watching cooking shows on TV. I just randomly digest the recipes in my mind and extract these digested information again when I am in the mood to try out sometime new. Well yes, there have been a few disaster episodes, but I am sure you don't really want to know what happened when I tried making dahi vadda from dried dal bhodhi!!! I thought I was being smart.. smarter than Sanjeev Kapoor.. smarter than my own mom. But pride does always come before fall.

Ok, back to my muffins! Well for the cake batter I just mixed sugar with butter then added eggs and flour. I like my cakes simple. I don't even put essence because somehow I enjoy that eggy aroma and taste. Then comes the fun part, pouring the batter into cute paper cups specially made for muffins and then slipping the tray full of yellow batter in cute (they really are so so cute) paper cups. baking can really make you feel good. I think it is because of all the ingredients like butter and sugar that goes into it. This reminds me of the story called "Kheer" by Indra Bahadur Rai. Rai in this short story tells us how life can be made beautiful by adding more sweet and rich ingredients just like how a kheer can be made more tasty by adding the best quality rice, the best quality milk and the best garnishing. I mean life should always be sweet and nothing best to celebrate life than with freshly baked cakes. Its just amazing returning home where you are welcomed with the aroma of baking. Husbands, I think this is the best way to please your wife if you have pissed her off. And dear wives this is all more excuse for you to get pissed off often!!! (its high time we realize that men and women are equal and that there isn't a rule saying that only women are to cook and clean at home. And there isn't also a rule saying that only men are allowed to get pissed off and complain that the chicken curry had less salt.)

Anyway while my muffins were being baked I got into frying the Chinese sausages. Chinese sausages are readily available in the market right now; you might have seen many pinkish red with dabs of white, sausages being dried in a few local houses in kalimpong. They are very different in taste as compared to the sausages which come in packets that is available throughout the year in prominent outlets in town. The main difference is that the Chinese sausages have a sweet taste along with the musty sun dried flavour of meat. The best way to fry sausages are to first boil them in little water in a saucepan and to let all the water dry up in the pan itself, this will ensure that the



sausages are cooked nicely and will also keep the sausages from bursting when fried. I prefer to fry sausages in its own fat which gets left behind in the pan once all the water has dried up. Aahhh and the sizzling that comes from the pan is amazing and the aroma is mouth watering. Therefore once my sausages were fried this way I chopped them in an inch sized pieces and then mixed them up with slightly cooked onions and added mayonnaise, salt, pepper, mustard sauce, tomato sauce and then filled my bread slices with this mixture and further added thin slices of fresh tomatoes and a slice of cheese. perfect!! Just the way I like it. I may not know the exact preparation for a sandwich but hey, trust me. It was finger licking good!!!

The next item on my list was the cheese pokoras, made from local cheese of course. aAll I did was cut the cheese into cubes(you can pop them in your mouth too while doing it, like me) and rolled them up with mashed potatoes, which I had already mixed with salt pepper, chilly powder. Its all a child's play actually. Then I dipped these balls into a batter made of beasan. the batter was of course mixed with the required amount of salt and pepper. I had also added some ajwain grains to it. And then I put them in hot oil till they turned golden brown. yuumm nice and crisp. The best part of pooping these hot pokoras in your mouth is to enjoy the melted cheese that floods your mouth as soon as you have enjoyed the crispness of the exterior . woofff!! slurp slurp slurp..i feel likeJughead right now!! I am sure most know what I am talking about! Especially cheese lovers!! :)

Yes, then came the saag chips, which is a little tricky. I love my saag fresh and just plucked from my vegetable garden. For the saag chips, its best to pluck tender leaves as they are small in size and thus easy to fry without ruing the shape of the leaf. Once these tiny leaves are washed I dried them for a bit to remove excess water. Then I slightly coated them with the same beasn batter that I had used for the cheese pokora. But you must remember that the beasn coating must be transparent and not coven the green natural colour of the leaf. Then comes the tricky part. Due to the water content, while putting the leaf into the hot oil you might end up with huge unwanted moles on your face neck and hands. The best way to do it is by using tongs. Just slip the saag into the oil with tongs and tilt as far as possible. But unfortunately I couldn't practice what I am preaching right now and ended up with two moles on my neck. hmm all the more reason for me to wear more necklaces :) Anyway, the frying of these pokoras have to be swift, exactly like that of frying a papad. They will turn crisp and green. And when you slip them in your mouth oooooo itll be so crunchy yet so lush.

While I was frying my chips I had already set my kettle on for some tea, which I poured into my favourite teapot. I just love teapots and collect them in dozens. and along with my tea pot I had also taken out my favorite matching cup and saucer. I have a weakness for cups and saucers. They just feel so Jane Austen.

And while these were done so were my muffins. My kitchen had the loveliest aroma by then though it did look like as if it had been bombed.(Yes I did end up getting lecture from my mom about how how has to maintain cleanliness while doing any dirty job, but that was afterwards). My kitchen then just didn't seem an appropriate place to enjoy my tea. So after frowning for a moment I decided to take my teat to my garden. All the more Jane Austen!!!! It was the perfect setting. the sun was about to set and the birds were all returning to their nests. The air was crisp, but fresh and inviting. The only thing I lacked was company. There I was all alone in a corner of my garden sipping tea and munching my saag chips. It was then I felt a dab of pain for a moment because no one was there to actually tell me how my sandwiches had turned out, how my saag chips tasted, how strong was the taste of cheese in my pokoras. but yes, I must admit, I kind off also enjoyed that lone time. It was relaxing and quite charming.

But I sincerely hope that from the next time I get the opportunity of great food with great company. I hope that I can meet new people and get to enjoy what they have cooked. I want it to be all about different places, different people and different food.

Well till then..

Bon appetite...

# VRINDAVAN SCHOOL,

## 13TH MILE, KALIMPONG

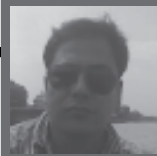


**AFFILIATED TO I.C.S.E. New Delhi  
WB 256**

**Streamlined syllabus for  
Commerce, Science & Arts**

**The school has highly qualified faculty, good  
environmental atmosphere, well equipped  
library, computer and science laboratories  
and with reasonable school fee.**

**Homely hostel facility with big playground,  
own spring water, experienced nurses and  
with Hindu & English diet**



**Raja  
Puniani**

## **Soliloquy Hall**

**My grammar is weak. I'm strong in slangs only, I beg your pardon. Name is name of name. May I know your name? Dialogue delivery is not being smooth. Handicapped music is just mocking madly stretched eyes. Mad eyes. What I think now is that I should erase my discreet mumbling phonetics. One seems smart talking without speaking. I'm stranger as you are. What's this 'name'?**

**By the way, what to call cat in words? Today is Black Day. It is democracy here. In democracy, as you know very well, a spade is never told a spade. Tie your tongues with golden chain. And learn to speak with limited vocabulary. Otherwise join a school of language learning, your accent shall get so polished that you may even get superb entry in a call centre. It's too boring to talk too long, you know! All should know buying and selling but ought not to know to speak.**

**I cry aloud a beast word. Echo mimes me. Language has its cunning limbs. I get to know to have cunning hands, cunning feet, cunning teeth, cunning eyes, cunning ears, too. But a programmed brain runs limited softwares. I mime my echo. I feel embarrassed and scared when A reappears and B vanishes forever on and from the stage. Impasto strokes of your word don't mean the meaning. They are painted on the air, with the colourless brush of our thoughts.**

**Capitalism or communism – which one you choose to have? We should speak crystal clear with our tied tongues and chocking larynx. Vanilla or Strawberry – ice cream is chilled! Tell fast. And don't forget to remember that the hall is full of audiences. They may forget but will never forgive. They can watch the observed. Listen the heard. All around us. Yes, we are there. Sitting cross-legged.**



Dr. Sonam B. Wangyel

# Their Words – Our Vocabulary

The people of rank, the big guns, will come under etymological scanner today. Commencing at the very top we have 'badshah' which came our through the Persian 'padisshah' ['pad' a throne, 'shah' a prince/ruler]. For a Nepali speaker this deconstruction is interesting because according to Turner's Nepali dictionary 'pad' is given to mean honour, rank, position etc. and 'shah' as we all know is a king. Despite having the correct terminologies for this compound word we have sadly taken preference for the inaccurate pronunciation and spelling of 'badshah' and more regrettably it has been standardized by our grammarians and lexicographers. Stepping down the ranks we come to the 'lat saheb', which originally referred to the Governor-General but by the time I was a child state governors were designated as such. It is a hybrid of the English 'lord' and the vernacular 'saheb' but since the Hindi speaking folks have a predilection to transform the English 'o' to an 'a' [kalage for collage, corrugated for corrugated, caff for cough etc.] 'lord saheb' became 'lard saheb' and thence 'lat saheb'. With western influence pervading in matters all this address has become obsolete and 'governor' is the accepted word and even 'rajyapal', the Hindi alternative, is losing its grounds. Another in the dying throes is 'mukhtiyar'. In Nepali the Chief of the Army used to be referred to as 'mukhtiyar', though the original Arabic word, 'mukhtar', meant the chosen, an authorized agent or an attorney. The word in that sense is still used in some parts of India but is not popular amongst the Nepali speakers. The word 'kazi' too is in the decline. Like many others we scrutinized it too comes from the Arabic: 'kadi', meaning a judge. The second letter in this word is spelt with the Arabic alphabet 'zwad' which gives some scope for dual pronunciation and so in India it is

always a 'kazi' and not 'kadi'. A 'kazi' seems to hold different hierarchal post in different places. In Sikkim he was a kind of a estate-owning minister, in Nepali he would be a senior officer or just a honourific word attached to a Newari or Chhetri boy and in India a designated person who passed judgement in religious matters according to Islamic tenets. In Sikkim a 'kazi' is no more a minister or a heredit senior officer, in Nepali it is seldom used to denote a high ranking officer and as an honorific attachment to a name it is no more a prerogative of the Newars and Chhetris, and in modern judicial system the 'kazi' as a minor Muslim judge has been buried with the past. Yet another word that is on the phase-out tray is 'amin', again Arabic, meaning 'a trustworthy person'. He once served as a kind of a junior judge in India and in Nepali he held a loftier position with the power to imprison for thirty-six years. Today the word survives in our Land-Revenue Department as a surveyor of lands. Closely related to matters concerning land was the 'taludhar' and we know from previous issues in this column that '-dar' means 'a holder' and 'taluk' which comes from the verb 'ta'al-luk' means 'to hang or depend'. The composite word probably signified someone on whom the people had to depend upon. In India a 'taluk' became a stretch of land and 'talukdars' were people who owned vast tracts of lands. Today, as a landlord, the word has become dated for it is not difficult to come across many Bengalis who bear his grand title but possessing little wealth and no land whatsoever to justify its original significance.

**Dr.S.B.Wangyel's  
latest book  
"Footprints in the  
Himalaya"  
is available in all  
leading book stalls  
in Darjeeling,  
Kalimpong,  
Gangtok & Siliguri**

**Total Pages: 227**

**Page Size 9" X 5"**

**Pricing:**

**Hard Bound: Rs  
450:00**

**Paper Back" Rs  
250:00**





**His Holiness The 13th Dalai Lama in 1900 with the King of Sikkim**



## **M/s Bhrigunath Singh Jewellers**

**Mfg. & Dealers of 24 Carat Gold  
Ornaments, Silver Novelties  
& Gems Store**

**FOREIGN MONEY EXCHANGE AVAILABLE**

**ONGDEN ROAD, KALIMPONG,  
DIST. DARJEELING, INDIA  
PHONE (03552) 256319 (O),  
9800486589, 9733264619**

**AMERICAN  
EXPRESS**

**WESTERN  
UNION**